

Chapter VI

Analysis of the Readers

From the beginning Sir Hans Sloane, Parliament, and the trustees had intended to make the British Museum accessible for public use. Exactly who visited the museum is unknown. The application registers for the tours were not saved. The officers, however, kept the lists of people for whom Reading Room tickets were issued.¹ Throughout the Museum's history the administration maintained a policy of admitting anyone who could produce the proper credentials. Both Raymond Williams' and Richard Sennett's definition of the public in its widest sense included individuals who seemed largely impersonal or were unknown. The Reading Room public was more personal and included close friends and acquaintances of the trustees and officers. The 'public' chafed at this definition and the procedures for obtaining access. They argued for an easier form of access that required less intimacy with the trustees and officers but would permit more people in professions or who were engaged in historical or literary works to use the library. As occupations and position in society were a key argument for one's use of the library, it is the purpose to examine the people who had access to the Reading Room to determine the Reading Room public.

The diaries and admission books varied in the quantity of information. Not all surnames included a Christian name, but all were preceded by a title, such as 'Mr.', 'Dr.', 'Rev.', 'Lieut.', or 'Mrs.'. Some names were recorded with initials. We can assume that these were men, because women were entered as 'Miss' or 'Mrs.'. Further identification was assisted by the inclusion of street and/or city addresses, and by 1820 a person's residence was routinely noted.

¹The British Library, Department of Manuscripts, and the British Museum, Central Archives have records for 1759-June 1810, 1820-1836. The records from 1759 until the 1770s were also recorded in the Committee Minutes, and had some names not found in the diaries.

Finally, in a few cases, the officers listed the reader's place of employment instead of an address, or provided the occupation in addition to an address. The entry, 'Mr Hartstinct, Islington, Minister Plenipotentiary of the United Provinces to the Circle of Lower Saxony and the Hans Towns' provides far more information about the man and the readership than the simple, but not unusual entry, 'Mr Baker'. As a result, many of the statistics are not complete, so should be treated with a degree of caution. A good guideline is to consider quantities as the maximum number that could be accounted for or traced. To say that there were thirteen clerics among the readers in 1800 should be interpreted as the maximum that could be determined. With the number of untraceable people, it is possible that the number could be higher. In any case with the amount of data the statistics provide, they offer an opportunity for categorization.

By 1836 there were more than 2,000 reader's tickets issued. With so many people to examine for one year it would not be feasible for as large a period as 1759-1836 to cover every year. The coverage was scaled to include the years 1759, the last year of each decade from 1770 to 1830, and 1836. As the lists became longer, further refinement became necessary beginning with 1800 which covered the period January through July. For 1810 through 1836, two months, January and June or July were used. The names and any accompanying information were checked against entries in biographical dictionaries for more detail on the person's life. Additional readers were identified by matching names with authors in the OCLC data base system and the British Library Catalogue and looking for information in the author's book (title page, preface, text) to confirm that the author and the reader were the same person.

In 1759 there were 135 readers. There were 17 clerics, 19 doctors, and 18 who were reverend doctors making a total of 54. Of the 19 who were doctors only, at least eight were physicians or surgeons, and one, William Blackstone, was traced to a law professorship at Oxford. The other ten remain unknown. Many of the clerics achieved outstanding posts later in life. Charles Lyttleton, John Ross, John Douglas, Robert Lowth, and John Green became

bishops, while the Bishop of Norwich was a reader in 1759. Jeremiah Milles did not achieve lawn sleeves, but his uncle was Bishop of Waterford and Lismore, and his father-in-law was Archbishop Potter.

Also among the 1759 readers were three knights, two lords, and two earls. Seven of the readers were graduates or faculty from Oxford, and sixteen were from Cambridge. From the number of men who had the title 'reverend' or 'doctor', the number of Oxbridge men must have been higher. The British Museum attracted foreign academics as well. Jean-Christophe Hennings, a professor at Kiel, and Godefroy Achenwell, a German economist at the University of Goettingue, had tickets.

After clerics, government employees, law, and law-related positions accounted for the next sizable group with a total of 15. There were five attorneys and one judge, while the other occupations varied. There were three readers who were, or had been, members of Parliament. The Earl of Egmont had been elected to the House of Commons in 1741, received the earldom in 1748, and was appointed to the Privy Council in 1755. John Pitt was serving as M.P. for Dorchester when he received the ticket, while Isaac Browne had been elected an M.P. in 1744 and again in 1747. Among Daniel Wray's accomplishments was a position as deputy teller of the exchequer. Isaac Netto was a notary public, Edward Capell was a Deputy Inspector of Plays, and James Burrow was a legal reporter. Stephen Leake was deputy lieutenant of the Tower Hamlets, while his son, John, was commissioner for auditing the public accounts. Together with Thomas Sheriff, the three men were at the Herald's office. Their professions paid early tribute to the significance of the British Museum for researchers in emblems, coats of arms, numismatics, and genealogies.

There were other readers whose occupations did not fall into any of the above categories. David Hume was a philosopher and historian, Richard Putteney was a botanist, William Massey was a writer and translator, Timothy Cunningham was an author and compiler of legal and

antiquarian books, John Talbot Dillon was a critic and historical writer, Jared Leigh and Mr. Errhet were artists, and Mr. Channing was an apothecary.

A final tie that linked many of the readers was club membership. There were twelve readers who were members of the Royal Society, and eight who were members of the Society of Antiquaries. Daniel Wray, Jeremiah Milles, William Burrell, William Stukeley, and Stephen Martin Leake, Jr. were members of both societies. It is clear, then, that in 1759, use of the Reading Room at the British Museum was firmly in the hands of the propertied and educated.

For the period 1770-1810 there were 333 readers. Of this number 156 can be identified by occupation.² Of the 333 readers there were 113, or 1 in 3, who were clerics, physicians or had the title 'doctor', or lawyers or law students. They would have fit in very well with the librarians who served them, because, with the exception of Joseph Planta (1773-1827) and John Obadiah Justamond (1773-78), all the librarians in the period 1765-1803 were either clerics or physicians. The other groups of readers included 12 artists, architects, and writers, 13 men who worked for offices of state or were military officers, 9 antiquarians or historians, and 9 miscellaneous occupations. Like the librarians, many of the readers came from a university background. Almost all the librarians hired between 1765 and 1805 were members of the Royal Society and/or the Society of Antiquaries, but among the readers there were 16 men who were members of either society. In spite of the small number of members, a large number of the identified readers had identical educational and professional backgrounds as the librarians. There were 47 readers who published works after they visited the Reading Room, and 23 of the 'authors' were clerics, physicians, or lawyers.

²This number does not include the 7 members of the nobility, all of whom were from France, except Baron de Scheffer who was from Poland.

Who were these men? Among the clerics there were Westley Hall (1770), who had been a pupil of John Wesley, Gottlob Christian Storr (1770), the Protestant theologian of Stuttgart who visited the library with his brother, Gottlob Conrad Storr, Samuel Ayscough (1780) who was hired as an assistant librarian for the Museum in 1787, and Peter Elmsley (1800) who was a printer for the Royal Society. Not all the clerics can be identified in as much detail as the men listed above, but from the information the officers recorded, enough can be determined to demonstrate a diverse background. For example, in 1790 Reverend Smirinoff was the chaplain to the Russian envoy, Reverends Evans and James Dallaway were at Oxford colleges, John Duncombe was from Hereford, Reverend Wintle was the chaplain to the late Archbishop of Canterbury, Reverend Wright was the Secretary to the Society of Antiquaries, John Pridden was the curate of St. Brides, Fleet Street, Daniel Lysons was curate of Putney, and John Moore, the rector of St. Michaels, Bassishaw, helped Benjamin Kennicott (1759) in collating the Hebrew manuscripts of the Old Testament. Richard Palwhele, although a minister, was also the author of Renton of Devonshire.

Among the lawyers the list included Andrew Coltee Ducarel (1770) who was a doctor of civil law. Ducarel's life had interwoven with the history of the British Museum. In 1729 at the age of 16 he was under Sir Hans Sloane's care for three months because he had lost an eye. In 1755 he applied but failed to get a library position at the Museum. In 1770 he was working on the records at the State Paper Office in Whitehall with two other men, Sir Joseph Aylofffe, an attorney, and Thomas Astle, who had passes to the library. Astle had a prior link to the Museum, when, in 1759, he was hired temporarily to make an index for the Harleian manuscripts. In 1764 a royal commission had been created to superintend methodizing the records at the Office at Whitehall, and in view of the fact that the three men received their passes on the same day, the research at the library must have been related to the commission.

Other attorneys included John Reeves (1780) who was the king's printer and served as a commissioner of bankruptcy in 1780. Richard Paul Jodrell (1780) was a lawyer who later served as an M.P. from 1790-92 and 1794-96 but was better known for his work as a classical scholar and dramatist. Because he inherited wealth, George Mason (1780) hardly practiced law but pursued his taste for letters and landscape gardening. Oliver Cromwell (1790) was a descendant and biographer of the Protector. Sir John Coxe Hippisley (1800), although a lawyer, spent much of his time in political activities. He was an M.P. (1790-96) and worked as a negotiator at the Vatican for the English government (1792-96). He negotiated the marriage of the Duke of Württemberg with the Princess Royal and was knighted for the efforts (1796).

Among the physicians were some notable men who were not native Englishmen. Dr. John Frederick Gmelin (1770) was from Tübingen and came to the library with his brother, Christian Gottlob Gmelin. George Fordyce (1780) had studied at the University of Aberdeen and attended medical school at the University of Edinburgh. After he moved to London in 1759 he lectured on chemistry and medicine. Charles William Quin (1780) was an Irishman of King's and Queen's College of Physicians and was Physician General of His Majesty's Army in Ireland and of the Royal Hospital for Invalids near Dublin. John Moore (1790) attended Glasgow University and had served as a doctor for the army. He knew Smollet, attended William Hunter's lectures, and traveled with the Duke of Hamilton for five years. Quin and Moore were two readers who had served with the army, and there were four more military officers, as well as other readers whose positions were state related. Sir John Irwin (1780) was a general and the son of a general. He was made commander-in-chief in Ireland in 1775, and he served as an M.P. (1762-1783). Captain Thomas Davies (1780) rose to the rank of Major General in the Royal Artillery by the end of the century. Colonel Bellew (1780) was a member of the 1st Regiment of Guards. In 1800 Colonel Wright and Lieutenant Napier had tickets to the Reading Room. In addition to Sir John Irwin and Sir John Coxe Hippisley who were M.P.s, Philip Yorke (1780)

was an M.P. from 1774-81, and George Ellis (1800) accompanied Lord Malmesbury to the Hague in 1784 and was employed in diplomatic business there, and in 1796 was elected M.P. for Seaford. Finally, Mons. Marhard (1770) was the Hessian Minister, Mons. Tocquot (1790) was an avocat au Parlement de Nanci, and Mr. Hartstinct (1800) was the Minister Plenipotentiary of the United Provinces to the Circle of Lower Saxony and the Hans Towns.

As it has been noted, the trustees wrote that the principal intention of the British Museum was "for the Use of learned & studious men, as well natives, as foreigners. . . ." ³ For each of the five years under study in the period 1770-1810 there were foreigners who used the Reading Room. Although they came from Manheim, Geneva, Turin, Prague, Upsala, and other cities, the overwhelming majority came from France. Among the readers in 1790 were Chevalier Gorman, Mr. Walkinter, Mons. de Mercy, and Mons. Tocquot who were from France. Throughout the decade the Reading Room lists included several names beginning with 'Abbé', 'Count', 'Monsieur', or names of French extraction. By 1800 there was a greater influx of Frenchmen. The revolution had forced the Abbé de Tressan to move to Italy, Germany, Russia, and finally to England. In the period from January through July, ten tickets were issued to French noblemen and émigrés. ⁴ The proportion was even more striking, for 71 tickets were issued in the seven month period, giving the French a 1 in 7 ratio among readers.

Numerous artists, architects, writers, and historians used the library. George Saunders (1790) was an architect who in 1790 published A Treatise on Theatres. Henry Edridge (1790) was a miniature painter who had studied at the Royal Academy, and Valentine Green (1790) was

³Birch, A Collection of Papers Relating to the Establishment and Government of the British Museum, Add. MS 4,449, fols. 118-119.

⁴Baron de Recourt, Vicomte de Segonzae, Marquis de Marcournay, Marquis de la Gallissoniere, Abbé de Tressan, Comte de Marinier, L'Abbé Danicourt, Mons. L'Abbé Gautier, Bishop of Angoulesme, and L'Abbé Le Pointe. In addition there were three names of French extraction in the list, Mr R. Rosseau, Mr de Rochechouart, and Alexander La Borde. Because the officers did not use the French title 'monsieur' but used 'mister', I am hesitant to assume they were French by nationality and have not included them with the ten people above.

a mezzotint engraver to the king. In 1800 the portrait painter, Ozias Humphry, R.A., and in 1810 the Irish painter, Adam Buck, were issued tickets to the Reading Room.

The year 1770 saw the admission of the historian, Edward Gibbon, who had attended Oxford and whose father had been an M.P. (1734-47). Nine years later Gibbon wrote about his disappointment with the lack of public libraries in London, and that many historians had to buy the works they needed, if booksellers could find them.⁵ The historian, David MacPherson, obtained a pass in 1790 and another one in 1800. Henry Sampson Woodfall (1790) printed The Public Advertiser and had been in and out of court on charges of libel against the king (1770) and Burke (1784) and for publishing a handbill expressing satisfaction at Admiral Keppel's acquittal (1779). John Payne Collier (1810) was a reporter for The Times and later for the Morning Chronicle. In 1849 he testified at Parliamentary hearings and advocated a printed rather than a manuscript catalogue for the British Museum library. Samuel Johnson's biographer, James Boswell, was issued a ticket in 1790. Thomas Park (1810) worked as an editor of other people's material, including the poets, William Shenstone and Robert Burns.

There were readers whose wealth made it unnecessary to have a profession. Topham Beauclerk was the wealthy grandson of the Duke of St. Albans and the son-in-law of the Duke of Marlborough and received a ticket in 1770 and another one in 1780. At the other end of the spectrum were the shopkeepers, clerks, minor civil servants, and aspiring, respectable artisans whom Kenneth Hudson stated were at the lowest level of a potential museum public in the eighteenth century.⁶ In 1780 Mr. Leroux, a watchmaker of Charing Cross, and in 1800 Owen Jones, a furrier on Thames Street, received Reading Room tickets. Nothing more is known about

⁵Edward Gibbon, The Miscellaneous Works of Edward Gibbons, Esq. With Memoirs of His Life and Writings, Composed by Himself, Vol. 4, Classical and Critical, With occasional notes and narrative by the Right Honourable John, Lord Sheffield, a new edition, with considerable additions (London: John Murray, 1814), p. 591-92.

⁶Hudson, A Social History of Museums, p. 26.

Mr. Leroux than the information the librarian wrote in the Reading Room diary. Mr. Jones, however, founded the Gwyneddigion Society of London in 1770 for the study of Welsh literature and archaeology, and in 1789 he published a collection of the poems of Davydd ab Gwilym. Although Jones's background indicated an interest in scholarly endeavors, he was a businessman, and Leroux was an artisan.

The year 1820 is significant for studying the readers. During the preceding six years there had been criticism about access and agitation for change. From 1804 to 1812 readers could gain access from the recommendation of someone who knew an officer or trustee. The change in 1812 prompted letters to The Times and to the trustees from men who assumed that their occupation, such as medicine or law, or their position in society should justify a ticket. In The Times 'A Citizen' wrote that the library was closed to all but a privileged class.⁷ In 1821, the M.P., Thomas Lennard, said that there was a son of an eminent professor at Geneva who wanted to examine the manuscripts of Rousseau's works but could not obtain the necessary recommendation.⁸ With so much criticism about people who could not gain access, it is important, therefore, to determine the Reading Room public.

In 1820 there were 112 readers for January and July, and there was a noticeable breadth of professions and diversity of backgrounds. Ten readers were clerics including the Rev. George Thackeray who was the Provost of King's College, Cambridge and had been chaplain in ordinary to George III. The Rev. Stephen Clissold was a writer on trade and in 1820 published Considerations on the Trade, Manufactures, and Commerce of the British Empire. There were eleven lawyers. Thomas Amyot, an attorney, was also the private secretary to Mr. Windham, the war and colonial minister. Charles Butler was called to the bar in 1791, and because of changes

⁷The Times (14 October 1814), p. 2d.

⁸Parliamentary Debates new series 5 (11 April 1821): 155.

in the law he was the first Catholic barrister since 1688. Sir Alexander Croke was a lawyer who held judgeship in vice-admiralty court in Halifax, Nova Scotia from 1801-1815. Samuel Heywood was a serjeant-at-law and Welsh judge. Sir Christopher Robinson was an admiralty lawyer who was an M.P. There were two other M.P.s, Alexander Boswell, the oldest son of James Boswell, and Daniel Gurney.

There were fewer artists, writers, and men of science, and although they were not as diverse as the lawyers, they were just as accomplished. John James Chalon and Alfred Edward Chalon were brothers who studied at the Royal Academy. John was a landscape and genre painter, and Alfred was a portrait painter. Alfred went on to become an Associate Royal Academician (A.R.A.) in 1812 and a Royal Academician (R.A.) in 1816. Bartholomew Howlett was a draftsman and engraver, and Henry Bone was an enamel painter to the Prince of Wales (1800), A.R.A. (1801), R.A. (1811), enamel painter to George III (1801), and later to George IV and William IV. The writers included men of fiction and non-fiction. Charles Mills was a historical writer. Sharon Turner was a historian who wrote History of England from the Earliest Period to the Norman Conquest, and Washington Irving was known for his literary classics. Irving later became the U.S. minister to Spain. Edward Griffith had been a solicitor and a Master in the court of common pleas, but after 1820 he did a lot of work for the Zoological and Linnean Societies. William Hasledine Pepys was an inventor and the founder of the Askesian Society. He was a member of the Royal Society and the Mineralogical Society, treasurer of the Geological Society (1811), and president of the Royal Institution (1816).

There were miscellaneous groups of readers whose occupations gave greater dimension to the readership. Captain Vitch was a member of the Royal Engineers, and Captain Porvys was a member of the Coldstream Guards. George Blyth was a comptroller of army accounts and the Duke of Kent's secretary. Thomas Curson Hansard, the printer of the Parliamentary Debates had

a ticket, as did John Britton, the topographer. Britton and John Payne Collier (above) also had tickets in 1810.

One group of readers who did not use the library in large numbers was women. Of the 333 readers in the period 1770-1810, there were 3 women. Mrs. Hooke of Great Queen Street received her pass in 1770, and Anne Paulet and Mrs. Haistrock received their passes in 1780. The statutes did not deny access on the basis of sex, and the first women to use the Reading Room were Lady Mary Carr and Lady Ann Monson in 1762. In 1820 there were five women readers. Women were a small minority representing fewer than 1% of the readers from 1770 to 1810 and rising to 4.6% for two months in 1820. The statistics for 1820 gain a different perspective when certain facts are taken into consideration. All five women received the tickets in July. The time of year may have explained why there were no female applicants for January. Four of the women were not married. Finally, four of the women were not 'independent'. In other words, they had not applied for tickets by themselves. Mary and Anne Power received tickets at the same time as their brother or father, John Power, all of whom resided at 44 Lime Street. Mr. and Miss Baker of Northampton were listed on the same line (brothers, fathers, and sons were recorded on separate lines). James Pulham of 28 Kenton Street had a pass for January, but when he renewed it in July, Mrs. Pulham was listed with him. Had he married? The sole female listed by herself was Angeline Walford. The British Museum rules did not discriminate according to sex, but the number and characteristics of the women readers, and the way they were registered, indicated that they may have been using the library for joint ventures with another family member or that a family member was supervising them.

After 1822 readers could obtain tickets to the library from recommendations by people who knew an officer or trustee. For January and July 1830 there were 290 people who received

Reading Room tickets.⁹ The person who kept the Reading Room lists recorded the name of the referee after the reader's address for 90 readers. Of this total all but 8 of the referees were people who were neither employees nor trustees of the British Museum.¹⁰ (It is quite likely that the other 200 people were recommended by officers or trustees, because in earlier times when only an officer or trustee could give recommendations, as a rule the lists did not record the referee's name.) With at least 82 readers who were recommended by people other than officers or trustees, more than 1 in 4 members of the Reading Room public were not friends or acquaintances of the officers or trustees. This minority of readers resembled Raymond Williams's definition of the public as unknown readers or the crowd.

In March 1830 there was a row over the opening and closing hours of the library. Ellis claimed that the clerks who used the library had been the ones to instigate the change. Based on the petitioners' remark that these readers seldom came to the library, presumably the clerks were not scholars or men in holy orders but were officers in charge of the general conduct of a business or subordinate employees in offices or shops who kept accounts, made copies of documents and other mechanical work of correspondence.¹¹ Although many of the professionals or wealthier readers had, or went on to obtain fame in some aspect and were written about in biographies and dictionaries, the clerks were not so fortunate, so determining the number of clerks at the library is tenuous at best. The Museum officers occasionally recorded the reader's place of employment next to the name. W.B. Rooke worked in the Comptrollers Office at the Stamp Office, Joseph Foss Dessiou was at the Admiralty Office, J.H. Rich was at

⁹George Jeremy, Stedman Whitwell, John Phillips, Dr Thomas Orger, and George Knapp received tickets for both months and have been counted once.

¹⁰John E. Gray, an officer, recommended 4, Davies Gilbert, President of the Royal Society, recommended 2, the Lord Chief Justice recommended 1, and Sir Henry Hallford, President of the College of Physicians, recommended 1. Charles Watkin Williams Wynn, M.P., recommended Benjamin Thorpe, and Thomas Spring-Rice, M.P., recommended Mr [Craufurd Tait] Ramage, but neither man was a trustee.

¹¹The Oxford English Dictionary, 2nd ed. (1989), s.v. "Clerk."

the Exchequer Office, and John Henry Marsh had 'Bray & Warren's Office' penned next to his name. Lord Clements was at the Foreign Office, but a member of the aristocracy would not have been an office clerk. For that matter, it cannot be stated that the other four men were clerks, but their offices kept hours similar to the Museum's. The officers recorded the Rev. J.B. Deane as a merchant and Richard Taylor as a printer, and although they were not clerks, their work must have kept them busy during part of the day.

Among the professional occupations there were 29 clerics, 17 attorneys and an additional 14 readers whose address was the Inns of Court or Chancery, 14 people who went by the title of 'Dr.' or surgeon¹² (6 of whom have been identified as physicians), and 12 people in the military. Among this group of professionals were the Rev. Ebenezer Henderson, a missionary who formed the first congregational church in Sweden (1811), superintended a translation of the New Testament into Icelandic, and established the Danish Bible Society (1814). Octavius Winslow was a Baptist minister from Brooklyn, New York. Thomas Babington Macaulay was a non-practicing attorney better known for his contributions to the Edinburgh Review. He received a Reading Room ticket in January and in February became an M.P. Lt. Col. Joseph Bouchette and his son, Robert, had tickets. The father was Surveyor General of Lower Canada and in 1831 published The British Dominions in North America; or a Topographical and Statistical Description of the Provinces of Lower and Upper Canada ... (1831). Sir Richard Downes Jackson was a major general who in 1839 was appointed commander-in-chief of the forces in British North America and served as administrator of the government of Canada three brief periods from 1839-1842. Major North Ludlow Beamish was a military writer, and Captain William Nugent Glascock wrote novels.

¹²Gilbert Burnett was not listed by title but was a surgeon and is included in the total. Richard Brinsley Hinds (1812-1847) was the surgeon attached to the expedition of H.M.S. Sulphur which went around the world (1836-42). Because he was 18 at the time he received the ticket, he was not a physician, and I have not counted him among the total. Dr Christopher Irving and Dr William Henry Crook had the degree, 'LL.D.' and are not among the 14.

Among the other occupations there were 3 teachers, tutors, and lecturers, 3 painters and engravers, 3 historians, a phrenologist, and an architect. Anthony Panizzi had been a faculty of law at the University of Parma, came to England in the mid-1820s, and in 1828 procured an Italian professorship at University College. In April 1831 he began employment at the British Museum and became Principal Librarian in 1856. Richard Cleasby was a philologist who wrote An Icelandic-English Dictionary. He was in England from 14 June-17 August 1830 and received his ticket in July. Samuel Curtis was a florist who owned the Botanical Magazine. Richard Taylor, the printer (above), was also a naturalist, a member of the Linnean and Astronomical Societies, and co-editor of the Philosophical Magazine. John Phillips was another man of science. He was Keeper of York Museum (1824-1840) and wrote A Guide to Geology (1834) and Treatise on Geology (1837).

It was common for readers to renew a Reading Room ticket. A family that had a long history at the library were the Townsends. In 1790 Francis Townshend [sic], a Windsor Herald, had a ticket. In January 1810 Francis Townsend, Jr. of the College of Heralds had one. In July 1830 Francis Townsend and his son, T.P. Townsend, both of whom were of the Heralds College, had tickets to the Reading Room. In a period of 40 years a father, son, and grandson used the library, and for the endeavors Francis, Jr. published Calendar of Knights (1828) and Catalogue of Knights From 1660 to 1760 (1833). Francis, Jr. also recommended Will Nicholson, Jr., who received a ticket in January.

In 1833 the M.P., William Cobbett, complained that the country gentleman, who seldom came to London, should not be taxed to support the British Museum, and "the man who worked in the fields, at a distance from London, could not come" to visit the British Museum. Sir Charles Burrell replied that, as soon as railroads to and from the metropolis were completed,

people from distant parts would come to London to visit the Museum.¹³ There were 528 readers for January and July 1836, and at least 46¹⁴ (8.71%) were not normally resident in London.¹⁵ In 1830 there were 19 readers (6.5%) who were non-resident. Although non-residents composed a small minority of readers, Burrell's prediction was accurate, for the numbers were growing.

There were readers from Munich, New York, Saxony, India, France, and Sweden. Within Great Britain most of the non-resident readers came from Oxford or Cambridge, but there were others from Dorset, Kent, Hampshire, Norfolk, Essex, Worcestershire, and Lancashire, and from such cities as Coventry, Exeter, Durham, Leeds, Bedford, and Leicester. Jacob and Joseph Busk were from nearby Cheshunt, while John Walker was from Elgin, Scotland.

One of the purposes of the British Museum was to further knowledge for the benefit of mankind. In 1834 a reader complained, that because the Museum had been closed for "10 days' holyday," it prevented him from earning his wages, because he earned a living from literary labor.¹⁶ There were numerous other members of the Reading Room public whose work depended on material at the Museum. William Smith Ellis used heraldic devices from Greek vases for the plates in The Antiquities of Heraldry. Arthur West Haddan used the Museum's Vatican transcripts for Councils and Ecclesiastical Documents Relating to Great Britain and Ireland. E.H. Lindo used the Harleian manuscripts for A Jewish Calendar for Sixty-Four Years. The Rev. H.J.B. Nicholson used the Cottonian manuscripts for The Abbey of Saint Alban.

¹³Hansard's Parliamentary Debates third series 20 (14 August 1833): 617-620.

¹⁴The figures are based on the addresses from the Reading Room lists, except for Dr Bureau de Rioufrey from France, Rev. G[eorge] C[ecil] Renouard from Swanscombe, Dr Lewis Loewe from Silesia, and John Duer from New York. There were numerous readers with foreign surnames, but there is no way to know if they were non-residents without more information. Part of the problem of determining which readers lived outside London is that they were occasionally listed by an address in London and not where the reader was actually from, so 46 is a conservative figure.

¹⁵Any place inside Middlesex. I also considered Kew in Surrey and Walworth as part of London.

¹⁶The Times (20 May 1834), p. 3a.

Charles Bucke used the Sloane manuscripts for The Book of Human Character. Robert Poole Styles used the Cole manuscripts for The History and Antiquities of the Abbey Church of Pershore. In the preface to George Roberts's The History and Antiquities of the Borough of Lyme Regis and Charmouth there was an acknowledgment that he visited "the library of the British Museum, on several occasions."¹⁷ John William Burgon in The Life and Times of Sir Thomas Gresham and William H. Morley in Description of a Planis Pheric Astrolabe ... thanked the librarians for the assistance they rendered which made the completion of their works possible. Since the time it had been founded, numerous readers had used the Museum's resources, and as this brief list indicates, the Reading Room public included people whose livelihood depended on the material at the British Museum.

One of the most notable features of the Reading Room clientele was the presence of Oxbridge fellows and graduates. After its establishment in 1827 London University proved to be a formidable rival to England's two premier universities at the British Museum library. For January and July 1836, twenty people were traced to Cambridge and Oxford, and seven were linked to London University. The comparison, however, becomes more significant when it is noted that, of the twenty, eleven were former students, and nine were current fellows and students.¹⁸ All seven men from London University were still at the institution as faculty and students. The readers' ties with education, though, were not limited to these three institutions. Edwin Abbott was with the Philological School, William Hunt was with the Central National School, John Marshall was at the Royal Military Academy, Joseph Means was a Latin lecturer at

¹⁷George Roberts, The History and Antiquities of the Borough of Lyme Regis and Charmouth (London: Samuel Bagster, 1834), p. xi.

¹⁸James Wood's entry was recorded in July '(B.A.), University of Cambridge'. He presumably applied for a ticket as soon as he graduated; therefore, I have chosen to count him as a person with former ties to the university.

the City Literary Institute, and Dr. Klein Grant was a lecturer of Therapeutics at the North London School of Medicine.

There were 27 people with the title 'Dr.' or 'M.D.' or who had the occupation 'surgeon' listed by the name. James Kennedy, Alexander Ure, William Bedford Kesteven, and William Bloxam were physicians but had no title ascribed to their names. John Duvance George was a medical student, which brought the total to 32 with 22 of the men confirmed as physicians.¹⁹ The legal profession was well represented too with 19 attorneys/law students. The number was probably much higher, for there were another 21 readers whose address was Lincoln's Inn, Gray's Inn, or the Temple or Inner Temple. Of course, primacy of clerics remained pronounced with 60 readers and 1 divinity student.

Other less numerous professions and occupations were that of artist and architect and people employed in offices. There were six artists and four architects. William Bardwell was an architect who wrote Temples, Ancient and Modern (1837). Walter Henry Watts, who had exhibited at the Royal Academy (1808-1830) and was miniature painter to Princess Charlotte (1816), was also a journalist. He had worked as a parliamentary reporter for the Morning Post (1803) and later joined the Morning Chronicle (1813). Watts's dual career was not atypical for the time. In fact, throughout the second half of the eighteenth century and the beginning of the nineteenth, many of the readers had more than one career or were noted for more than one claim to fame.

There were numerous state and private office employees. John Doutty worked in the Store Keeper Department of the Admiralty, Robert Lemon was employed at the State Paper Office where he discovered an original portrait of Milton in 1826, Mr. Weale was at the Office

¹⁹Thomas Steel was recommended by Robert Thomson, a confirmed physician, and Dr Willan was recommended by Richard Eastcolt, a confirmed physician; therefore, I have counted Steel and Willan as physicians. Dr Lewis Loewe had a Ph.D. from the University of Berlin, and he is not counted among the group.

of Woods, Thomas Haslam was a member of the Lord Chancellor's Office, Mr. W. Wilkins was an articulated clerk in a Mr. Scadding's office, Mr. Forrest worked for the Morning Advertiser, and W.W.E. Wynne worked at the India Board. Anthony St. John Baker had been the consul general in the United States from 1816 to 1832, and William Saunders Sebright Lascelles was an M.P. from 1820-32 and again from 1837-51. Samuel Birch later became Keeper of Oriental Antiquities at the Museum, and John Kesson worked at the Museum (1838-1857) as an attendant and temporary transcriber in the library.

The admissions lists revealed the readers, where they resided, who recommended them, and if the reader had previous tickets. Sometimes, the officers included the person's occupation or nationality. On a few occasions the information revealed the status of the readers. For the Rev. Gilbert Franckland Lewis the officers noted that he was the son of the Poor Law Commissioner, and for W.C. Young they wrote that he was the son of the M.P. for Tynemouth. They recorded Charles Smith as the son-in-law of John Thomas Smith formerly of the British Museum, and Joseph Slater as the grandson of the late James Bean.²⁰

Unlike the number of non-resident readers which grew from 1830 to 1836, there was no increase in women readers. In 1830 and in 1836 there were 13 women readers, but whereas in 1830 women comprised 4.48% (13/290) of the Reading Room public, in 1836 they comprised 2.46% (13/528) of the public. Clerics, doctors, and lawyers comprised over 100 readers, and when we add the military personnel, academics and students, and men in other research endeavors, there appears to have been a sizable number of professional men using the library. With the exception of Emma Roberts, an author who wrote Memoirs of the Royal Houses of York and Lancaster (1827) and Scenes and Characteristics of Hindostan (1835), the other 12

²⁰John Thomas Smith, Keeper of Prints, 1816-1833, and James Bean, Department of Printed Books, 1812-1826.

women's occupations (if they had one outside the home) or reasons for using the library remain a mystery. Women were barred from many occupations; therefore, the possibility of entering a field that might call for the use of a research library was very limited and would account for the small number of women readers. Although the British Museum had light literature, for women who wanted to read fiction, the numerous circulating libraries in London could have met those purposes.

Both Jürgen Habermas and Kenneth Hudson defined the public in sociological terms. According to Habermas the public were the educated classes, which included jurists, doctors, pastors, officers, and professors, while Hudson's definition went as far as to include the lower middle class, shopkeepers, clerks, minor civil servants, and artisans. For the period from 1759 to 1810 the overwhelming majority of identified readers were men who were among Habermas' educated classes. Over half the readers in 1759 and one third the readers in the period 1770-1810 were doctors, clerics, or lawyers. This high proportion of men in three professions with the ties of a university background and Royal Society and Society of Antiquaries membership indicates that the reading room public was a highly educated, and somewhat homogenous body. The similarities in backgrounds created a public that not only had ties to each other but mirrored the backgrounds of the librarians who served them.

Kenneth Hudson stated that the lowest level of a museum public would have been shopkeepers, clerks, minor civil servants, and artisans. The presence of Mr. Leroux, the watchmaker, and Mr. Jones, the furrier, confirm Hudson's thesis. A large number of readers could not be identified according to occupation, but the small number of artists, architects, printers, reporters, and writers in the library shows that the Reading Room public was not limited exclusively to the propertied or professional classes.

Because of changes to the procedures the Reading Room public of the 1820s and 1830s assumed a different definition of 'public'. At 21 per cent clerics, physicians, and lawyers

remained the largest occupational group among readers in 1836, though, this triad of occupations was not as preeminent as it once was. Artists, writers, men of science, military personnel, and professors had been identified as readers since the Museum opened, but the presence of people in the library who were employed in officers or as clerks in the 1830s indicated that Hudson's lower middle class was a part, albeit a small one, of the Reading Room public.

All the readers in the period 1759-1800 knew an officer or a trustee in order to get a Reading Room ticket. They were a 'known' public. By 1830 a large proportion of readers, 1 in 4, were members of an 'unknown' public, because they were recommended by someone other than a trustee or officer. They were what Raymond Williams called the 'crowd' and Richard Sennett called the 'stranger'. In 1836 the Reading Room public was principally a London-based professional male constituency. Non-resident readers, although a growing number in the 1830s, constituted fewer than 10 per cent of the readers. Women's presence in the library in the eighteenth century was so small that it was hardly negligible. In 1820 and 1830 the number of women was slightly less than 5 per cent, and in 1836 it dropped to fewer than 3 per cent. The statistics were low, but they demonstrated that by 1820 women remained a constant part of the Reading Room public.